

Claims

- 1 **1.** Method for controlling network devices via a MMI, **characterized by the**
steps of:
generating and at least partially displaying a hierarchical view of icons of all
devices (23-35; 76a-76j; 101-127) connected to the network and/or services
5 (24a-24c, 42, 43, 43a-43g, 44, 45, 46a-46o; 47-74, 75a-75h) corresponding to
the devices, and
coupling each of said icons with operating functions of the associated device
(23-35; 76a-76j; 101-127) and/or service (24a-24c, 42, 43, 43a-43g, 44, 45,
46a-46o; 47-74, 75a-75h), respectively, wherein said devices and/or services
10 are operatable from said hierarchical view.
- 2.** Method according to claim 1, **characterized by** recognizing a
sub-network (21; 1-6) being integrated in said network via a bridge (128-131)
and integrating said sub-network (21; 1-6) as an icon in said hierarchical view
15 of icons similar to said devices and/or services, wherein said icon assigned to
said sub-network (21; 1-6) has a higher order than icons assigned to devices
(23-35) and/or services (24a-24c, 42, 43, 43a-43g) of said sub-network.
- 3.** Method according to claim 1 or 2, **characterized in that** a device (23-
20 35; 76a-76j; 101-127) and/or service (24a-24c, 42, 43, 43a-43g, 44, 45, 46a-
46o; 47-74, 75a-75h) is operatable by drag and drop operations or by cut/copy
and paste operations.
- 4.** Method according to claims 1 or 2, **characterized in that** a device (23-
25 35; 76a-76j; 101-127) and/or service (24a-24c, 42, 43, 43a-43g, 44, 45, 46a-
46o; 47-74, 75a-75h) is operatable via context sensitive menus (46; 75, 76)
shown in said hierarchical view after selecting the icon associated with said
device and/or service.
- 30 **5.** Method according to claim 3 or 4, **characterized in that** after operation
at least one control signal and/or at least one data stream is sent from one de-
vice (101; 106; 108) to at least one other device (115; 102; 105).
- 6.** Method according to anyone of the preceding claims, **characterized in**
that said hierarchical view of icons is organized according to predetermined

1 user-selectable rules.

7. Method according to claim 6, **characterized in that** said hierarchical
view of icons is organized depending on the kind of said devices (23-35; 101-
5 127) and/or sub-networks (21; 1-6) connected to the network.

8. Method according to claim 6 or 7, **characterized in that** said
hierarchical view of icons is organized depending on the kind of services (47-
74, 75a-75h) being available in correspondence with said devices (23-35; 76a-
10 76j; 101-127).

9. Method according to anyone of the preceding claims, **characterized in
that** the AV/C protocol is used for controlling the devices (23-35; 76d-76j;
102-110, 114, 116-119, 121-126) and/or services (24a-24c, 42, 43, 43a-43g,
15 44, 45).

10. MMI for controlling network devices, **characterized in that** it is adapted
to perform the method as defined in anyone of claims 1 to 9.

20 11. Computer program product comprising computer program means
adapted to execute all steps defined in anyone of claims 1 to 9, when said
computer program product is executed on a computer (101).

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